

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the INTERNATIONAL BUREAU

PCT

NOTIFICATION OF ELECTION

(PCT Rule 61.2)

To:

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
 United States Patent and Trademark
 Office
 Box PCT
 Washington, D.C.20231
 ETATS-UNIS D'AMERIQUE

in its capacity as elected Office

Date of mailing (day/month/year) 25 July 2000 (25.07.00)	
International application No. PCT/EP99/09367	Applicant's or agent's file reference 1525PTWO
International filing date (day/month/year) 02 December 1999 (02.12.99)	Priority date (day/month/year) 02 December 1998 (02.12.98)
Applicant GIORDANI, Paolo et al	

1. The designated Office is hereby notified of its election made:

☒ in the demand filed with the International Preliminary Examining Authority on:
 28 June 2000 (28.06.00)

☐ in a notice effecting later election filed with the International Bureau on:

2. The election ☒ was
☐ was not

made before the expiration of 19 months from the priority date or, where Rule 32 applies, within the time limit under Rule 32.2(b).

The International Bureau of WIPO 34, chemin des Colombettes 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland Facsimile No.: (41-22) 740.14.35	Authorized officer Zakaria EL KHODARY Telephone No.: (41-22) 338.83.38
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PCT

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

(PCT Article 18 and Rules 43 and 44)

Applicant's or agent's file reference 1525PTW0	FOR FURTHER ACTION see Notification of Transmittal of International Search Report (Form PCT/ISA/220) as well as, where applicable, Item 5 below.	
International application No. PCT/EP 99/ 09367	International filing date (day/month/year) 02/12/1999	(Earliest) Priority Date (day/month/year) 02/12/1998
Applicant HENKEL KOMMANDITGESELLSCHAFT AUF AKTIEN et al.		

This International Search Report has been prepared by this International Searching Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 18. A copy is being transmitted to the International Bureau.

This International Search Report consists of a total of 4 sheets.

☒ It is also accompanied by a copy of each prior art document cited in this report.

1. Basis of the report

a. With regard to the language, the international search was carried out on the basis of the international application in the language in which it was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

☐ the international search was carried out on the basis of a translation of the international application furnished to this Authority (Rule 23.1(b)).

b. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application, the international search was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

☐ contained in the international application in written form.

☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.

☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.

☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.

☐ the statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.

☐ the statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished

2. ☐ Certain claims were found unsearchable (See Box I).

3. ☐ Unity of invention is lacking (see Box II).

4. With regard to the title,

☒ the text is approved as submitted by the applicant.

☐ the text has been established by this Authority to read as follows:

5. With regard to the abstract,

☒ the text is approved as submitted by the applicant.

☐ the text has been established, according to Rule 38.2(b), by this Authority as it appears in Box III. The applicant may, within one month from the date of mailing of this international search report, submit comments to this Authority.

6. The figure of the drawings to be published with the abstract is Figure No.

☒ as suggested by the applicant.

☐ because the applicant failed to suggest a figure.

☐ because this figure better characterizes the invention.

2

☐ None of the figures.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

I. International Application No

PCT/EP 99/09367

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC 7 G01N27/06

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 7 G01N

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	EP 0 769 575 A (NOVAMAX ITB S R L) 23 April 1997 (1997-04-23) page 3, line 12 - line 25 page 3, line 55 - line 58 page 4, line 56 - line 59 page 5, line 3 - line 13 page 5, line 40 - line 42 page 6, line 59 - page 7, line 1	1-4, 23
A	the whole document --- -/--	5-22, 24-49



Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.



Patent family members are listed in annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

"E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date

"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)

"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.

"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

17 March 2000

Date of mailing of the international search report

29/03/2000

Name and mailing address of the ISA

European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2
NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk
Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl,
Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016

Authorized officer

Stussi, E

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No
PCT/EP 99/09367

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 5 354 383 A (BIANCHI MARCO) 11 October 1994 (1994-10-11) cited in the application column 3, line 25 - line 29 column 3, line 43 - line 47 column 3, line 57 - line 62 column 5, line 42 - line 48	1-5, 23
A	the whole document	6-22, 24-49
Y	--- PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN vol. 1996, no. 03, 29 March 1996 (1996-03-29) & JP 07 294509 A (KAWASAKI STEEL CORP), 10 November 1995 (1995-11-10) abstract	1-4, 23
Y	--- PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN vol. 1996, no. 10, 31 October 1996 (1996-10-31) & JP 08 160003 A (NISSHIN STEEL CO LTD; MITSUBISHI HEAVY IND LTD), 21 June 1996 (1996-06-21) abstract	1-4, 23
A	--- GB 2 000 196 A (TOKAI ELECTRO CHEMICAL CO) 4 January 1979 (1979-01-04) page 1	1-49
A	--- PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN vol. 018, no. 303 (P-1751), 9 June 1994 (1994-06-09) & JP 06 066766 A (MITSUBISHI HEAVY IND LTD), 11 March 1994 (1994-03-11) abstract	1-49
A	--- PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN vol. 1995, no. 08, 29 September 1995 (1995-09-29) & JP 07 128273 A (MITSUBISHI HEAVY IND LTD), 19 May 1995 (1995-05-19) abstract	1-49
A	--- WO 98 15674 A (COLGAN SARAH JANE ; SANDERS NEIL JOSEPH (GB); MCDONOGH COLIN FREDER) 16 April 1998 (1998-04-16) page 1, line 27 - page 2, line 2 page 4, line 24 - line 36	1-49
A	--- GB 1 383 637 A (CENTRALEC SOC) 12 February 1974 (1974-02-12) column 1 - column 2 --- -/--	1-49

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No
PCT/EP 99/09367

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	DE 195 43 468 A (METALLGESELLSCHAFT AG) 28 May 1997 (1997-05-28) example 1 -----	1-49

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

PCT/EP 99/09367

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
EP 0769575 A	23-04-1997	IT MI952140 A JP 9241874 A US 5843240 A	18-04-1997 16-09-1997 01-12-1998
US 5354383 A	11-10-1994	IT 1245594 B AT 129753 T DE 69114265 D DE 69114265 T DE 505606 T DK 505606 T EP 0505606 A ES 2082063 T FI 920580 A GR 3018681 T JP 2655770 B JP 4304391 A	29-09-1994 15-11-1995 07-12-1995 18-04-1996 03-02-1994 04-12-1995 30-09-1992 16-03-1996 30-09-1992 30-04-1996 24-09-1997 27-10-1992
JP 07294509 A	10-11-1995	NONE	
JP 08160003 A	21-06-1996	NONE	
GB 2000196 A	04-01-1979	JP 1152167 C JP 54009120 A JP 56008109 B AT 355390 B AT 439378 A AU 3733978 A BE 868219 A BR 7804006 A CA 1119080 A DE 2827697 A ES 471061 A FR 2395331 A IN 147685 A IT 1096676 B LU 79861 A NL 7806638 A SE 7807184 A ZA 7803397 A	30-06-1983 23-01-1979 21-02-1981 25-02-1980 15-07-1979 03-01-1980 18-12-1978 16-01-1979 02-03-1982 11-01-1979 01-01-1979 19-01-1979 14-05-1980 26-08-1985 02-02-1979 28-12-1978 25-12-1978 27-06-1979
JP 06066766 A	11-03-1994	NONE	
JP 07128273 A	19-05-1995	NONE	
WO 9815674 A	16-04-1998	AU 4565497 A EP 0958405 A JP 10182112 A	05-05-1998 24-11-1999 07-07-1998
GB 1383637 A	12-02-1974	NONE	
DE 19543468 A	28-05-1997	IT MI962421 A	20-05-1998

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

NOTICE INFORMING THE APPLICANT OF THE COMMUNICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION TO THE DESIGNATED OFFICES

(PCT Rule 47.1(c), first sentence)

From the INTERNATIONAL BUREAU

To:

GERVASI, Gemma
Notarbartolo & Gervasi S.p.A.
Corso di Porta Vittoria, 9
I-20122 Milan
ITALIE



Date of mailing (day/month/year) 08 June 2000 (08.06.00)		IMPORTANT NOTICE	
Applicant's or agent's file reference 1525PTWO			
International application No. PCT/EP99/09367	International filing date (day/month/year) 02 December 1999 (02.12.99)	Priority date (day/month/year) 02 December 1998 (02.12.98)	
Applicant HENKEL KGaA et al			

1. Notice is hereby given that the International Bureau has communicated, as provided in Article 20, the international application to the following designated Offices on the date indicated above as the date of mailing of this Notice:
JP,KR,US

In accordance with Rule 47.1(c), third sentence, those Offices will accept the present Notice as conclusive evidence that the communication of the international application has duly taken place on the date of mailing indicated above and no copy of the international application is required to be furnished by the applicant to the designated Office(s).

2. The following designated Offices have waived the requirement for such a communication at this time:
CA,EP,MX,ZA

The communication will be made to those Offices only upon their request. Furthermore, those Offices do not require the applicant to furnish a copy of the international application (Rule 49.1(a-bis)).

3. Enclosed with this Notice is a copy of the international application as published by the International Bureau on 08 June 2000 (08.06.00) under No. WO 00/33061

REMINDER REGARDING CHAPTER II (Article 31(2)(a) and Rule 54.2)

If the applicant wishes to postpone entry into the national phase until 30 months (or later in some Offices) from the priority date, a demand for international preliminary examination must be filed with the competent International Preliminary Examining Authority before the expiration of 19 months from the priority date.

It is the applicant's sole responsibility to monitor the 19-month time limit.

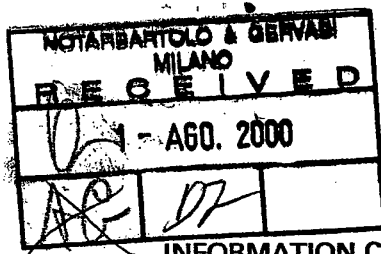
Note that only an applicant who is a national or resident of a PCT Contracting State which is bound by Chapter II has the right to file a demand for international preliminary examination.

REMINDER REGARDING ENTRY INTO THE NATIONAL PHASE (Article 22 or 39(1))

If the applicant wishes to proceed with the international application in the national phase, he must, within 20 months or 30 months, or later in some Offices, perform the acts referred to therein before each designated or elected Office.

For further important information on the time limits and acts to be performed for entering the national phase, see the Annex to Form PCT/IB/301 (Notification of Receipt of Record Copy) and Volume II of the PCT Applicant's Guide.

The International Bureau of WIPO 34, chemin des Colombettes 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland	Authorized officer J. Zahra
Facsimile No. (41-22) 740.14.35	Telephone No. (41-22) 338.83.38



PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the INTERNATIONAL BUREAU

To:

GERVASI, Gemma
 Notarbartolo & Gervasi S.p.A.
 Corso di Porta Vittoria, 9
 I-20122 Milan
 ITALIE

 INFORMATION CONCERNING ELECTED
 OFFICES NOTIFIED OF THEIR ELECTION

(PCT Rule 61.3)

Date of mailing (day/month/year) 25 July 2000 (25.07.00)		IMPORTANT INFORMATION	
Applicant's or agent's file reference 1526PTWO			
International application No. PCT/EP99/09367	International filing date (day/month/year) 02 December 1999 (02.12.99)	Priority date (day/month/year) 02 December 1998 (02.12.98)	
Applicant HENKEL KGaA et al			

1. The applicant is hereby informed that the International Bureau has, according to Article 31(7), notified each of the following Offices of its election:

EP : AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE

National : CA, JP, KR, US

2. The following Offices have waived the requirement for the notification of their election; the notification will be sent to them by the International Bureau only upon their request:

National : MX, ZA

3. The applicant is reminded that he must enter the "national phase" before the expiration of 30 months from the priority date before each of the Offices listed above. This must be done by paying the national fee(s) and furnishing, if prescribed, a translation of the international application (Article 39(1)(a)), as well as, where applicable, by furnishing a translation of any annexes of the international preliminary examination report (Article 36(3)(b) and Rule 74.1).

Some offices have fixed time limits expiring later than the above-mentioned time limit. For detailed information about the applicable time limits and the acts to be performed upon entry into the national phase before a particular Office, see Volume II of the PCT Applicant's Guide.

The entry into the European regional phase is postponed until 31 months from the priority date for all States designated for the purposes of obtaining a European patent.

The International Bureau of WIPO 34, chemin des Colombettes 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland Facsimile No. (41-22) 740.14.35	Authorized officer: Zakaria EL KHODARY Telephone No. (41-22) 338.83.38
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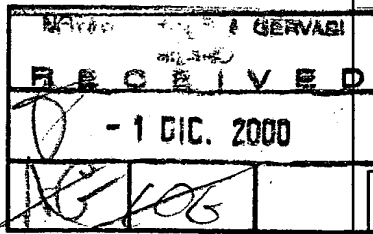
PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

From the
INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINING AUTHORITY

PCT

To:

GERVASI, Gemma
Notarbartolo & Gervasi
Corso di Porta Vittoria, 9
I-20122 Milan
ITALIE



NOTIFICATION OF TRANSMITTAL OF
THE INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT

(PCT Rule 71.1)

Date of mailing
(day/month/year)

29. 11. 00

Applicant's or agent's file reference
1525PTWO

IMPORTANT NOTIFICATION

International application No.
PCT/EP99/09367

International filing date (day/month/year)
02/12/1999

Priority date (day/month/year)
02/12/1998

Applicant

HENKEL KOMMANDITGESELLSCHAFT AUF AKTIEN et al.

1. The applicant is hereby notified that this International Preliminary Examining Authority transmits herewith the international preliminary examination report and its annexes, if any, established on the international application.
2. A copy of the report and its annexes, if any, is being transmitted to the International Bureau for communication to all the elected Offices.
3. Where required by any of the elected Offices, the International Bureau will prepare an English translation of the report (but not of any annexes) and will transmit such translation to those Offices.

4. REMINDER

The applicant must enter the national phase before each elected Office by performing certain acts (filing translations and paying national fees) within 30 months from the priority date (or later in some Offices) (Article 39(1)) (see also the reminder sent by the International Bureau with Form PCT/IB/301).

Where a translation of the international application must be furnished to an elected Office, that translation must contain a translation of any annexes to the international preliminary examination report. It is the applicant's responsibility to prepare and furnish such translation directly to each elected Office concerned.

For further details on the applicable time limits and requirements of the elected Offices, see Volume II of the PCT Applicant's Guide.

Name and mailing address of the IPEA/



European Patent Office
D-80298 Munich
Tel. +49 89 2399 - 0 Tx: 523656 epmu d
Fax: +49 89 2399 - 4465

Authorized officer

Conner, M

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PCT

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference 1525PTWO	FOR FURTHER ACTION See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416)	
International application No. PCT/EP99/09367	International filing date (day/month/year) 02/12/1999	Priority date (day/month/year) 02/12/1998
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC G01N27/06		
Applicant HENKEL KOMMANDITGESELLSCHAFT AUF AKTIEN et al.		

1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.



2. This REPORT consists of a total of 6 sheets, including this cover sheet.

- ☒ This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e. sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).

These annexes consist of a total of 15 sheets.

3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:

- I ☒ Basis of the report
- II ☐ Priority
- III ☐ Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- IV ☐ Lack of unity of invention
- V ☒ Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- VI ☐ Certain documents cited
- VII ☒ Certain defects in the international application
- VIII ☐ Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand 28/06/2000	Date of completion of this report 29. 11. 00
Name and mailing address of the international preliminary examining authority:  European Patent Office D-80298 Munich Tel. +49 89 2399 - 0 Tx: 523656 epmu d Fax: +49 89 2399 - 4465	Authorized officer Stussi, E Telephone No. +49 89 2399 2265 

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT**

International application No. PCT/EP99/09367

I. Basis of the report

1. This report has been drawn on the basis of *(substitute sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to the report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17).)*:

Description, pages:

1,3,5-19	as originally filed			
2,2a,4,4a	as received on	13/11/2000	with letter of	09/11/2000

Claims, No.:

1-48	as received on	13/11/2000	with letter of	09/11/2000
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Drawings, sheets:

1/3-3/3	as originally filed
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2. With regard to the **language**, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language: , which is:

- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of the international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).
- ☐ the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rule 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any **nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence** disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

- ☐ contained in the international application in written form.
- ☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
- ☐ The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
- ☐ The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.

4. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No. PCT/EP99/09367

- ☐ the description, pages:
☐ the claims, Nos.:
☐ the drawings, sheets:

5. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed (Rule 70.2(c)):

(Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report.)

6. Additional observations, if necessary:

V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Yes: Claims	
	No: Claims	1-5,22,23
Inventive step (IS)	Yes: Claims	
	No: Claims	6-21,24-48
Industrial applicability (IA)	Yes: Claims	1-48
	No: Claims	

2. Citations and explanations
see separate sheet

VII. Certain defects in the international application

The following defects in the form or contents of the international application have been noted:
see separate sheet

Comments on Section V

1. Reference is made to the following documents:

D1: EP-A-0 769 575

D2: US-A-5 354 383 (= IT-01245594)

2. Document D1, which is considered to represent the most relevant state of the art, discloses the following features in combination:

a control device for nitric acid free pickling baths (title) which comprises means to take a sample of the bath to be analysed; means to analyse said sample in order to measure a number of parameters according to specific conductivity and potentiometric methodologies as well as the redox potential of said sample (p.4, ll.57-59, p.5, ll.40-42) and its temperature (p.5, l.46 and e.g. tables of the examples, where the set temperature is reported, i.e. measured), restoring means apt to calculate, according to the above measured values, the quantity of correction chemicals to be added to the pickling bath in order to restore at the desired level the value of said parameters and to actuate at least a device to add into said pickling bath said quantities of correction chemicals (p.6, l.59 - p.7. l.1); further characterised in that said measured parameters are the concentrations of sulphuric acid, of hydrofluoridric acid and of bivalent and trivalent iron ions (p.5, ll.40-41 and tables of the examples 1 and 2).

It is noted that the different "means" for carrying out the steps of the control process, though not explicitly mentioned in D1 as such, are implicitly disclosed in combination, since exactly the same operations are carried out on the same system in order to achieve the same result.

The subject matter of claim 1 is therefore not new (Art.33 (2) PCT).

3. Document D2 (the Italian priority of which is cited in the present application) could as well have been chosen as closest prior art, cf. in particular col.3, ll.43-47, col.4, ll.62-63 and col.5, ll.43-49.

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT - SEPARATE SHEET**

International application No. PCT/EP99/09367

4. Claim 22 discloses a method that corresponds to the device of claim 1 and thus it is also considered to be not novel.
5. Dependent claims 2-21 and 23-48 do not contain any features which, in combination with the features of any claim to which they refer, meet the requirements of the PCT in respect of novelty and/or inventive step, the reasons being as follows:
 - 5.1 The additional features disclosed in claim 2 and 3 are known from D1 (or D2), cf. e.g. D1, p.5, ll.40-42. The subject matter of claims 2 and 3 is thus not new.
 - 5.2 The subject matter of claim 4 is known from D2, cf. e.g. col.3, ll.57-62.
The same objection holds, *mutatis mutandis*, for the subject matter of claim 23.
 - 5.3 The additional feature of claim 5 is implicitly disclosed in D1 or D2, since it is mentioned that the concentration of the different chemicals is measured.
 - 5.4 In claim 6 a slight constructional change in the device of claim 1 is defined which comes within the scope of the customary practice followed by persons skilled in the art, especially as the advantages thus achieved can readily be foreseen.
Consequently, the subject-matter of claim 7 lacks an inventive step.
The same objection holds for claims 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 17, 20, and 21.
 - 5.5 In claim 9 a particular range of values of accuracy is given, which does not give rise to any unexpected technical effect.
A similar objection holds for claims 12, 15, 16, 18, 19, 25 and 39.
 - 5.6 The feature of claim 24 is merely one of several straightforward possibilities from which the skilled person would select, in accordance with circumstances, without the exercise of inventive skill, in order to solve the problem posed.
The same objection is valid for claims 26-38 and 40-48.

**INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY
EXAMINATION REPORT - SEPARATE SHEET**

International application No. PCT/EP99/09367

Comments on Section VII

1. The features of the claims are not provided with reference signs placed in parentheses (Rule 6.2(b) PCT).
2. With reference to p.4, ll.24-25 the description does not support claim 1 (Art.6 PCT) since essential features of the claim are mentioned in said passages of the description as optional ("preferably").